

[New Behaviors](#) by [Luddleston](#)

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Summary:

One would think that a god as old as the very existence of humanity would someday run out of new sensations to experience.

This was not entirely true.

Thanatos deals with feeling sexual desire for the first time in his life and confronts his complete and total lack of knowledge on this front. Zagreus tries to help, but is mostly baffled that Than has never come, *like, ever?*

New Behaviors

Author's Note:

I wanted to write something dealing with Than having never had any sort of sexual attraction/desire to anybody before he and Zag got together, and asked my best and only roomie if Than should come too fast all the time, or not be able to entirely. Clearly she requested the latter!

Anyway, this isn't too far off from some stuff my ace ass has done, just extrapolated into a scenario where the person in question doesn't have internet access and is also the God of Death and therefore nobody makes sex jokes around him.

One would think that a god as old as the very existence of humanity would someday run out of new sensations to experience. That there were only so many, and that, statistically, they would be exhausted after so many eons of Thanatos' existence. Of course, there were some he would never experience, not being a mortal, but as for the ones he could... well, he'd existed long enough that he could safely say he'd felt it all.

This was not entirely true.

He discovered this while pinned against the comfortable surface of Zagreus' bed. He was not truly pinned—he could move, but he would rather not disturb Zagreus, who had settled his full weight atop Thanatos and was currently treating him to something Thanatos had never expected to be the recipient of. That is: an extensive, passionate kiss.

Love, at least in the sexual sense, had never been a concern for him.

Certainly, a part of him had always loved Zagreus. But he'd long become used to the flurry of emotion that sent him spinning every time Zagreus so much as smiled in his direction. Zag's admittance that he felt the same had perhaps caused a surge in this particular emotion, but it was still a feeling Thanatos was used to, however overwhelming it may have been.

This was different.

Nothing had prepared him for the physical side of this. For the heat of Zagreus' body against his, the weight of him, the way Thanatos' own physical form reacted to it.

For the way Zagreus groaned out his name as Thanatos' body, unbidden, curled to meet his.

When all this began, Thanatos had the unpleasant feeling that he was going to be terrible at it—and he probably was, uncoordinated and sloppy, not entirely certain where to put his hands and all too distracted by how Zagreus' many escape runs had put a lot of muscle on him. That feeling had faded, not because his uncertainty had been soothed, but because of the overpowering need that invaded every part of his mind like climbing vines digging into a brick wall until it crumbled apart. Thanatos was crumbling now, any sense he had overwhelmed by his body's single plea:

More.

More.

Was all this heat something from Zagreus, or was some of it from within? Had his body always been capable of—

Thanatos stopped thinking, because Zagreus had shifted so that his hips rolled against Than's. Blood and darkness, Zagreus was *hard*. Thanatos belatedly realized he was in the same state himself.

He was entirely unused to being in such a state of arousal. He'd never had need to be. It was unfamiliar and it was *consuming him*. He arched up against Zagreus, driving his hips forward, seeking friction for reasons he couldn't fully understand.

It was all perfect, heady pleasure for a moment, every point of contact with Zagreus' body practically singing. Heat and pressure and the wet slide of Zagreus' mouth against his—Thanatos could practically scream with it. It was almost too much.

And then it was.

"Zagreus," he said, pulling away, gripping Zagreus' shoulders not to pull him closer, but to put some space between them.

Zagreus groaned like it pained him to stop moving, but any frustration dropped into concern as he caught sight of Thanatos' face. "Than? All right, love?"

Every inch of his skin prickled with *too much, too hot, I can't take this*. "I... need to slow down," he admitted. Did his heart really need to beat so fast? So much for gods being above mortal physicalities.

"Sure, of course," Zagreus said, still breathing very hard, his face wild, like he'd much rather keep going. Thanatos cringed, his teeth digging into his lower lip.

"It's just. I'm not. Perhaps not quite as experienced as you are, here."

"Oh?" Zagreus cocked his head to the side, looking a bit like Cerberus when he was confused. "Oh! Than, I didn't realize. That's fine, that's... kind of sweet, actually." Zagreus shifted off of Thanatos' lap, reaching down to adjust himself in his leggings before settling at Thanatos' side, stretched out with his head propped up on one hand.

"Is it?"

"Yeah." Zagreus reached for him, but stopped when Thanatos flinched despite himself. He was still too overheated and overwhelmed, and wanted nothing more to douse himself in a lot of cold water, for some reason. "I like that I get to be your first."

"Oh. I guess that is... nice."

Zagreus must have sensed his increasing awkwardness, because he sat back at the head of the bed. "Come here. Let's talk about something else, you wouldn't believe what I pulled out of the magma in Asphodel earlier."

The wild part of him having settled with Zag's reassurances, he relaxed into Zagreus' presence, listening to him detail everything new he'd discovered on his most recent run. He didn't seem to entirely care how focused Thanatos was on what he said, content to chatter and let Than drift. The buzzing feeling subsided, and eventually he became comfortable enough to allow Zagreus to lie with an arm around him, petting through Than's hair as he closed his eyes and allowed himself to rest, for just a moment.

— — —

Zagreus was enormously gentle with him the next they spent any time together in his room. His touches were lighter, almost enough to tickle, and his kisses lingered, but did not deepen the way they had before. He paused often to ask if this felt alright, if he could touch Than here, if he wanted another kiss. And when the answer was no, he found something else.

They were lying side-by-side in the bed this time, allowing for a little more space between them, and yet, with his back to the rest of Zagreus' room, Thanatos got the creeping feeling he was being watched. The onlooker was nothing more than his own self-consciousness, but it was enough to have him hesitating, his hands clumsy on Zagreus' body like they had not been before, when he was so overwhelmed by lust he had no time to stop and think.

Now, he had plenty of time to stop and think.

All of his thoughts were completely unhelpful.

Should I be doing something different? Is this something he even likes? Is there something I don't know about that is supposed to be done right now?

This time, it wasn't heat, but questions that consumed him.

"Can I touch you here?" Zagreus asked, fingertips lingering at Thanatos' waistband and making his stomach suck in. They had both rid themselves of everything but their leggings, which was a step in the right direction, Thanatos supposed. He didn't know much about sex, but he did know you had to be naked.

He hesitated before answering. Did he want this? Or was it simply something that was necessary to get to the part where they were actually having sex?

"Yes," he said eventually, still unsure whether he wanted it even as Zagreus undressed him completely.

Zagreus spent a long moment looking at his naked form, which was not unenjoyable, because Thanatos knew what appreciation looked like in Zagreus' eyes. He liked the glimmer as Zagreus licked his lower lip, the feel of Zagreus' hand skirting down his flank and bare thigh.

"Gods, you're beautiful. It always manages to throw me." He looked again, and his eyes lingered. It took Thanatos a moment to realize they were lingering on his cock. "Is... do you like what I'm doing?"

"What? Yes. It's fine. Good, even." Why did he have to sound so damn *irritated* all the time? "Zag. I like it, I promise."

"Oh, that's... good? It's just, Than. You're not even a little bit aroused by this."

"I am, though." In a deep, distant part of him, buried under a hundred tiny anxieties and a tangled web of confusion.

Zag's eyes darted back down for a moment before meeting his again. "Really? But, uh, you're not..."

Ah. Right. He wasn't hard this time. Zagreus was—those leggings hid nothing—and Thanatos was left wondering if it was a bad thing that he wasn't. "I'm not sure why. It's nothing you're doing, I don't think. I... I'm doing something wrong, probably."

Zagreus lay his head down on the pillow, his laurels flickering against the silk. "My love. Are you perhaps overthinking this a bit?"

A handful of the hundred tiny anxieties bubbled up to the surface. "I think I might be," he said, so quiet he was afraid Zagreus didn't hear him.

"Let's do something else for now, then," Zagreus said, ever-gracious, swiftly kissing him before scrambling up and across the room to pluck a book off his desk. He'd left it open and face-down rather than marking his page. "I've been reading this lately, do you want to hear some of it? I'm not usually one for poetry, but it's quite good."

He swept a blanket off the foot of the bed and draped it over Thanatos with an easy flick of his wrist, as if this was something he did every day without thinking. Thanatos was fairly certain this was put on, and that Zagreus was attempting to give him the opportunity to cover himself up without having to wriggle back into his clothes. It was an opportunity he appreciated.

"Is your poetry particularly romantic?" he asked, giving Zagreus space to settle against his side.

"Some of them. Why? Want me to read you a particularly romantic one?" The way he put an arm around Thanatos' shoulders would have felt like his usual casual touches, except that he pressed a kiss to the side of Than's head along with it.

"I think you ought to, yes."

"I really should. You deserve to be wooed with the most romantic of poetry."

That simple statement made Thanatos fall further in love with Zagreus than any line of poetry could have.

— — —

"I'm sorry," Thanatos said, after another failed attempt (this time, Zagreus had laid mostly-still underneath him, allowing Thanatos to kiss and touch him as he pleased, and Thanatos had once again been done in by his own awkwardness and had to stop).

"Thanatos." Zagreus had been lying back on the bed, but he sat up to put himself face-to-face with Thanatos. "You don't need to apologize. Please don't, actually. I would never forgive myself for doing something that you

were uncomfortable with, and I'm glad that you call things to a stop when it gets too much."

Thanatos sighed, running a hand through his hair and then letting it fall back into his eyes. "Most people wouldn't have to stop so often, though, right?"

Zagreus shrugged. "You're not most people. I've known that since I met you." Zagreus was the one who was completely nude this time, and after Than had called things to a stop, he hadn't bothered covering up a bit. The torchlight made the mortal-warm tones of his skin look even warmer, his green eye standing out like a jewel in a golden setting.

"I was mostly apologizing because you haven't been able to... go further." Further into what, Thanatos didn't really know. But Zagreus always seemed to take a moment to stop himself, like his body wanted to keep moving. His cock hadn't even gone soft yet.

"Oh, I don't mind it." He stretched, arms behind his head, making the muscles lining his ribcage stand out. Thanatos sort of wanted to touch, but he was never sure if he should touch Zagreus again after he'd called a stop to things. "Just makes it a little sweeter when I finally do, you know?"

"Gods know when that's going to be," Thanatos muttered. Zagreus may have been a bit masochistic, but there was a difference between masochism and self-denial that lasted so long someone couldn't handle it.

"Huh? I meant when I... you know, myself?"

"What?"

Zagreus squinted at him, leaning in like he was trying to look past Thanatos' eyes and examine something in his mind. "You touch yourself, right?"

"As in... how?"

Zagreus made an inscrutable motion with his hand.

"What... is that supposed to be."

Zagreus' mouth dropped open, and then he thought better of it, looking at anything but Thanatos for a moment as he rubbed his jaw, thinking. "Alright, so, you might be a bit more inexperienced than I thought?"

"I never thought I'd need to know anything about sex," he admitted.

Zagreus returned his attention to Thanatos, reached out to brush the longest fringe of his hair behind his ear so that he could better observe Than's face. "Love. Not everyone's interested in sex, it's all right if you don't want to, if you never want to."

Confusion curdled into frustration, and Thanatos made an irritated little scoff. "That's the problem, isn't it? I don't even *know* if I'm interested!"

"Then you need more information," Zagreus decided, turning so that he faced Thanatos fully, sitting with his legs spread. "Let me show you."

Thanatos desperately wished he could have stopped himself from recoiling. "Show me what?"

"I won't touch you. Just watch me touch myself, yeah? Do you want to do that?"

"And by touch yourself, you mean..."

"My cock." He said it as though this should have been obvious from all his indecipherable innuendo and apparently-explicative hand gestures.

Was this a thing people did? Thanatos always assumed sex had to involve more than one person. Was that a thing he should be doing?

"You do have to look at me if you want me to show you," Zagreus said.

"Right."

"If you're not comfortable with this, I don't have to—"

"Just. Don't sit directly across from me. Come here." Thanatos indicated for Zagreus to take a place next to him, at the head of the bed. Zag went along

with it, propping up a pillow behind himself to keep the bookcase from digging into his back.

They were close enough to touch, Zagreus' left shoulder against Thanatos' right. Without direct attention on Thanatos, this was more comfortable.

Zagreus patted Thanatos' knee to get his attention. "Is it okay if I start?"

"Do what you want, Zag."

He laughed, and then he did what he wanted.

Thanatos barely had to angle his head to look over Zagreus' shoulder at his lap, pressed together as they were like this. In the time it had taken for them to discuss, Zagreus' cock had softened a bit, but he roused himself alarmingly quickly. Was it to do with his abilities as the god of blood? Thanatos noted distantly that the flush at the head of Zagreus' cock was the same shade of pink as Zag's lips. He thought perhaps Zagreus had one of those lips shoved between his teeth now, from the muffled noises he was making.

"So, you do this sometimes, when I'm not around?" Thanatos was mostly asking so he could hear Zagreus' voice.

"Yes." Zagreus gave a little sigh as he let his head rest on Than's shoulder. "I think about you while I do it."

"Really?"

"Mm-hm. About the way you kiss me, the way you touch me. How your voice sounds when we're together." Zagreus was stroking himself in short little jerks, his movements easy and sure. "Among other things."

"What other things?"

"I'm not going to tell you, or you'll think you have to do them for me to enjoy this." Zagreus rubbed his thumb over the head of his cock and moaned, the fingers of his free hand grasping what he could of Than's

leggings. “And believe me, what I’m doing right now is better than any fantasy I’ve come up with so far.”

Thanatos failed to believe that.

“Don't scoff at me like that, it's true! It's—*unf*—unreasonably hot that you're watching me get off to you.”

Thanatos decided to change the subject before he worked himself into a panic over the fact that he was currently being used as the object of Zagreus' desire. “Will it sound absolutely ridiculous of me if I ask what the purpose of doing this to yourself is?”

“A little bit! It feels good.” Zag's breath was hot against his shoulder. “And sometimes, I just can't stop thinking about you, and it'd be quite uncomfortable running around the underworld with an erection.”

“Hm. I don't just get them unprompted like that.”

Zag's movements slowed a bit. “Don't you?”

“No.” He looked away from Zagreus, watching him had become distracting enough that he couldn't think. “I don't. Honestly, Zag, I don't try to be willfully prudish. I just don't... it's never been relevant before.”

“Hand me that?” Zagreus indicated a bottle on the bookshelf slightly behind Than's head. He set it in Zagreus' hand and he thumbed open the stopper. “I suppose I shouldn't be surprised that you exist as a mostly non-sexual being. I dunno who you would have been with before.”

He'd had opportunities, sure, but he'd never bothered with them. “You're the only person I've ever felt this way about. Ever since you kissed me.”

Zagreus' fingers slipped on the bottle, and he would have dropped it on the sheets if Thanatos hadn't snatched it up. Zag's head tipped back and he cried out, breathy and half-stifled as he pressed one hand over his mouth, the other gripping his cock at the base. “Oh gods, really, Than?” Still muffled, almost impossible to interpret.

"Yes?"

"Oh, I love you." Zagreus snatched up Thanatos' hand and pressed it to his mouth instead of his own, kissing his palm and down his wrist. Thanatos was still holding the bottle in his free hand, and was not sure what to do with it.

"Um. I didn't meet to interrupt you—"

"No, no, that isn't it. I, uh..." Zagreus let his hand go and settled back down against his side, still not paying attention to his cock. "As it turns out, I am deeply aroused by the fact that you feel this way about me. If I didn't interrupt myself, this would have been over *much* too quickly."

"Oh, would it?" Thanatos couldn't help but feel a bit of smugness learning this. He wondered if this meant Zagreus also reached the point that Thanatos did, where things became too much, the sensations too intense, and he had to stop. Was that just how things ended? Certainly there was something more one did.

Zagreus seemed determined to show him what that 'something more' was. "Yes. It would. Give me that back, if you please."

The bottle contained oil, and he poured a little pool of it into his palm, then re-sealed the bottle and set it back on the shelf, fitting it in between two stacks of books. He swiped his fingers through it, until they were completely covered.

Thanatos was not certain what Zagreus intended to do with it, but that became clearer when he shifted himself so that he was a bit more horizontal on the bed, lifting his knees so that he could reach between his legs. Thanatos took a sharp breath in, and so did Zagreus. Given the angle, he couldn't quite see how Zagreus' fingers were moving, but Zagreus seemed to like whatever it was. His free hand stroked his cock again, spreading the oil there.

"Sometimes I think about you touching me here," Zagreus admitted. "Your hands are bigger than mine." He shifted, the spread of his legs widening.

Thanatos could see the bob of his throat as he swallowed. His eyes had nearly closed, only a tiny slice of green and red visible beyond his thick lashes.

Thanatos leaned forward, curious, and then held himself still, wondering whether it was strange to observe one's lover's body in such a way—looking rather than feeling, his fascination almost academic rather than passionate.

"You can look, if you want to," Zagreus said. "That's what I'm doing this for, after all. For you to look."

He had two fingers inside himself, buried to the knuckle, and he pulled them out and pressed them back in with an impressively steady, impressively quick rhythm. He twisted them as he removed them, and Thanatos could see that his fingers spread a little on some strokes. Zagreus' thumb rubbed at the space just above his entrance, and his hand on his cock matched the pace he was using to fuck himself. Honestly, Thanatos didn't think he'd ever seen Zagreus multi-task so well.

The unfamiliar tingle of his own arousal started to build within him, his leggings beginning to feel too tight in the groin. Zagreus' cock had started to leak clear fluid onto his fingers, and Thanatos was overcome with a strange urge to touch, to feel the texture of it. His fingers dug into the sheets beneath him, straining to keep from reaching out.

Why *wasn't* he reaching out?

"Zag. Can I... touch you?" he asked, before moving. Zagreus always asked Thanatos in advance, so it was only sensible.

Zagreus moaned, and swallowed again before finding the breath to answer. "Yes. *Please.*"

Zagreus' left hand dropped away from his cock but his right remained where it was at. Thanatos hesitated, reaching out to him, and Zagreus gave a little nod.

"How should I...?"

"Anything. Just do what I was doing before. *Please*, love."

Thanatos was hit by yet another reminder of how unused to this he was—he was unfamiliar with handling himself like this, much less Zagreus. Zag's skin was always warmer than his own, but here he was almost as molten-hot as the soles of his feet. Than gave him an experimental stroke, and then another.

"Tighter," Zagreus hissed, "oh gods, Than, I'm going to—"

Going to what?

Than squeezed a bit tighter, stroked him once more, and was given his answer.

Zagreus' entire body shook, his head tossed back, a hoarse shout splitting the air. This was so alarming, Thanatos nearly did not notice his cock, spilling white over Than's fingers where he still held Zagreus.

Zag was breathing hard, but he was also sitting up to look at Thanatos, and he was also grinning widely. "Fuck," he said, like he still couldn't catch his breath, "that was good."

Thanatos was beginning to realize that his impression of what sex involved was not very complete at all. This revelation made him late to noticing that Zagreus had snatched his hand up, and was licking up his own mess left on Than's fingers.

"Zag. Ugh. Isn't that...?" He knew he was making that look, the one Zagreus called cute, where his nose wrinkled up and his mouth twisted in irritation.

"It's fine." Zagreus sucked Than's forefinger into his mouth, the sensation of it nearly like a tug just below his navel. "I mean, if oral sex isn't gross, why would this be?"

Oral? Sex?

"Hm."

“I don’t mind how it tastes, anyhow.” He proved this by licking the last of it off Than’s knuckle, kissing the back of his hand. Pity. Thanatos might have tried it himself.

Zagreus gave a happy sigh and settled back onto the bed, looking up at Thanatos with the kind of adoration Than used to think nobody could ever face him with. He settled down beside Zagreus, his own arousal fading a bit as his desire to relax with Zag took over. They so rarely got time to just bask in each other’s company.

Thanatos pressed his face into Zagreus’ neck, breathing lungfuls of him. Despite the fact that his ventures there were only brief, Zagreus always smelled a bit like the surface, or perhaps a bit mortal. Thanatos wasn't sure; it was nothing like what he experienced of mortals. Zag's skin was damp but he didn’t have the sourness to his sweat that the fear of Death put into mortal bodies, nor the staleness to his scent that Thanatos recalled from picking up souls which had departed bodies lying in sickbeds.

Zagreus was comfortable to lie beside like this, still warm from exertion, nearly like how he was after a fight but much softer, all his limbs loose. His heart beat loud enough that Thanatos could hear it even without putting his head to Zagreus’ chest.

“That was so good,” Zagreus repeated again. “I don’t think I’ve ever come that hard just touching myself.”

Thanatos filed away this information, not entirely certain what context it fit into.

“So that... it feels good?” He wished he could bite the words back into his mouth and swallow them. Of course it felt good. Zagreus said as much. Twice.

“Mm, yes. Try it sometime, maybe. Let me know how you like it.” He said it while just looking at Thanatos, but the cadence of his voice made it sound like it should have accompanied a wink.

“What, you want a similar demonstration?” Thanatos said.

“Oh! Wow. I wouldn’t say no to one!”

He filed that away, too.

— — —

After Thanatos’ first attempt at touching himself, he decided with complete certainty that one thing was true:

He needed help.

Advice.

Counsel.

Whatever.

He had no clue what he was doing, couldn’t reach any sort of climax, and once again, managed to overthink to the point at which he became completely unaroused.

Who to ask, though? There were certainly books written about such things, although the fact that he would have to requisition them from some shade or another was unappealing.

There was Meg. He'd asked her once before about sex with Zagreus. She'd said something along the lines of, “no, you may not borrow my whip” and then Thanatos turned bright gold and teleported himself away. Any advice she had would probably be far too advanced for him.

Certainly, he could not ask Hypnos. Even if he managed to remain awake during the entire conversation, he would probably just laugh. Nyx was also out, as was Persephone (because of course she would know Thanatos was referring to her son). He considered Achilles, as he'd always been a quite calming presence, despite what the mortals who had his name listed as their cause of death would say. However, the only place Achilles could reasonably be spoken with was in the middle of the hall where everyone could eavesdrop, Zagreus included.

So. That left one recourse.

“Hhhaaaaaa.”

“I don’t know if ‘take it slow’ means anything any longer, Charon. The pace is already glacial.”

Thanatos sat atop a pillar that had once held some trinket or another meant to get Zagreus safely through the Underworld. He’d already made it out of the Temple of Styx by the time Thanatos arrived at Charon’s shop, which meant he was out battling his father or mucking about on the surface until something decided to kill him.

“Graaaaahhhh.”

“Of course. He’s a perfect gentleman.”

“Hhhreeeeoh?”

“What, you’d never done anything like... this, before either, right? Before Hermes?”

“RRHAAAGH.” Charon slammed the butt of his oar against the ground.

“Please. Everyone knows you’re not simply professional associates. Zag says he caught you with Hermes laid out on one of these.” Thanatos indicated the pedestal behind him.

He got some embarrassed grumbling from Charon, and then some wildly confusing grumbling.

“What do you mean, of course I have those!”

“Graaaaaah. Haaaaaa.”

“Huh. I didn’t know you have to consciously manifest one, Charon.” He was glad he didn’t have that issue. Who knows what Zagreus would have done if Thanatos didn’t have any equipment to work with in the first place.

“Mmmrrraaaaa,” Charon bargained.

Thanatos considered for a long moment.

"Yes, I do think that would be useful."

So here it was: Charon would explain all of it in all its lewd detail, but only if Thanatos promised not to interrupt him or to make any of those disgusted faces. The latter part was emphasized greatly, and, Thanatos soon discovered, was the more difficult half of it.

He'd never had trouble understanding his brother, who most people could not comprehend, but this was one of the rare times at which he wished he didn't understand quite so precisely. He was never going to be able to look Hermes in the eye again. That much was certain. Although, he did come away with a much fuller understanding of... several things, really. Including an instruction not to disturb his lover's wings, which was entirely unnecessary, considering Zagreus had none. Although, Charon's eyesight had never been particularly good, so perhaps Zag's laurels resembled Hermes' wings.

It also meant that Thanatos had a much fuller understanding of things he and Zagreus could do to each other.

An imagination full of all the things he and Zagreus could do to each other was a dangerous thing, Thanatos discovered, once he returned to the House. It planted a seed of *want* in him, and his blossoming of desire was not crushed by the knowledge that Zagreus was not at the House and therefore could not experiment with him. Instead, it grew fuller, more consuming by the moment.

Was this what Zagreus meant when he said *sometimes, I just can't stop thinking about you?*

Thanatos vanished himself from the hall and into his rarely-used quarters. As always, they were kept tidy and free of dust thanks to the efforts of the House's staff, and his bed was impeccably made. His room had none of the

clutter Zagreus' did, and no torches were lit, leaving it mostly in darkness, only a few of Ixion's rays bleeding through the thick curtains.

It didn't feel right.

Thanatos thought for a moment, then willed himself to stop thinking, then vanished again, following the trail of his desire.

He reappeared in Zag's bedroom.

First, he got a good look at himself in the Mirror of Night, his face flushed almost as golden as his eyes, which were difficult to focus. Was this what arousal looked like on him? Was this what Zagreus had seen, after that first kiss devolved momentarily into senseless pleasure? He thought he looked quite appealing like this, actually.

But he wasn't here to examine himself in the mirror.

He climbed into Zagreus' bed.

The pillows smelled like Zagreus, the blankets warm as if they'd absorbed some of his heat over time. Thanatos turned his head and breathed in deeper. Charon had spoken of kisses on other places aside from the mouth, and Thanatos imagined Zagreus doing this to him. Of course, he did kiss Than's cheeks and forehead and even his jawline sometimes, but Thanatos imagined Zagreus' mouth on his neck, wet tongue and sharp teeth, down to his chest and even lower.

Thanatos' fingers touched his own body where he imagined Zagreus kissing him—at some point, he had to shrug out of his robe and his chiton, leaving the clothes spread out on Zagreus' bed, a sprawl of black against the blue of Zag's bedding. He wished they were joined by the red of Zagreus' garments.

He continued his slow exploration of parts of him he would like Zagreus to kiss. His stomach, maybe, but not for long. His hips, certainly. He pinched at the skin stretched over his hipbone, imagining Zag biting at him there (biting, he had learned, was a thing one could accompany kissing with. Also the only recourse if one's face was skeletal in nature, but that wasn't Than's

concern) and his hips bucked forward, lifting off the bed of their own accord.

He didn't slide his pants down yet. Remaining dressed, keeping a barrier between his skin and whatever touched him would decrease his sensitivity, keep everything from becoming so overwhelming. A sharp, breathy noise echoed through the room when Thanatos touched his cock, and for a moment, he doubted it came from him. It must have, for there was nobody else in the room, but he was hard-pressed to believe he could have made such a plaintive noise.

He believed it when he made the same noise again seconds later, gently touching his cock through his leggings.

There were certain things mentioned that Thanatos' mind clung to. For one: an image of pressing his thighs together for Zagreus to rut between until he spilled more of the same sticky-white come he'd licked from Than's fingers. For another: Zagreus' hot mouth around Thanatos' cock, bi-colored eyes staring up at him with his usual mirthful glimmer.

That mental picture had Thanatos rocking his hips forward again, slowly working himself up. If he closed his eyes, he could imagine Zagreus here with him, watching Thanatos in the same way he'd watched Zagreus before.

Zagreus got this look about him sometimes, usually when he was distracted during one of their little contests because Thanatos took out a half-dozen enemies in a particularly showy maneuver. His eyes went wide for just a second and then they narrowed, focusing in, and his teeth dug into his lower lip for just a second before his mouth dropped open, one heavy exhale before a flash of teeth as he smiled. It was a look of interest, of desire, and Thanatos knew deep within him that it was exactly how Zagreus would look at him if he encountered him like this.

Hungry.

Thanatos tugged his leggings down, just enough to free his cock, no time for anything further. It stood hard, flushed with the same gold as his cheeks, and Thanatos got his hand around himself, his mind flashing with images of

Zagreus in this same position, lying with his side pressed against Than's, bringing himself this same pleasure. *Is this what he'd been feeling?*

He couldn't stop to think, couldn't focus on the way his breathing awkwardly hitched or his leggings tangled around his thighs. If he did, this moment would be lost. The only thing he could focus on was Zagreus.

How many times had Zagreus been in this exact position by himself, thinking about Than this way? Thanatos turned his face into the pillow, his hand coming up to crush it to his skin, burying his nose in Zagreus' scent. Certainly Zagreus did not sleep, but the bed held his scent enough that Thanatos had to believe he was like this often.

Tighter, he remembered Zagreus saying.

For a moment, Thanatos hit the dangerous peak of *too much, too fast, need to slow down*, but his mind had just presented him with the absolutely wonderful visual of how Zagreus looked after the act was over, flushed and pleased, of the shape his lips made when he told Thanatos *I love you*.

And he did not stop.

Nothing caught Death unawares, except, perhaps, for this.

Every muscle in his body clenched for just a second, and then an overpowering wave of pleasure soaked him through, his toes curling and his mouth open in a silent cry of ecstasy.

No wonder Zagreus did this to himself.

He couldn't slow down his breathing after, still teasing at himself with his hands just to see how it felt. It quickly became too much in a bad way, and he dropped his hand, enjoying the pleasant bonelessness that overtook him. He felt, strangely, like he might want to fall asleep.

His eyes closed and he allowed himself a moment simply to breathe.

The moment would have lasted longer if it hadn't been for the interruption.

"Well. Hello."

He nearly didn't hear, but as soon as he did, he bolted upright, propped up on one elbow and staring at Zag, who must have just come through the curtain. He was bright red, leaning on the doorframe like he needed it to stay upright.

"Zag—"

"Gods, you're about to send me back to the Styx after I just climbed out." He shook his head as if he really had just gotten out of the pool, although thankfully without the customary spray of red water. Then, he darted over to the bedside, one knee up on it before he paused. "I... do you want me to...?"

"Blood and darkness, come here."

Thanatos was still uncomfortably half-out of his leggings, but he allowed Zagreus to sweep him into a kiss regardless. Not only had he adjusted to Zagreus' enthusiasm, he found himself *craving* it, opening his mouth to encourage a deeper kiss.

"I may have figured something out," Thanatos said, by way of explanation. Zagreus' forehead rested against his, and he found himself arrested by the ferocity of his gaze.

"Uh-huh. I see that." Zagreus reached behind himself to unclasp his greaves, swearing at them when he didn't get it the first time. They clattered to the floor with twin metallic thunks after enough encouragement. "Did it feel good?" He allowed Thanatos to unclasp his belt and send it and his pauldron to join the rest of his armor on the floor.

"Better than I thought it would."

With Zagreus bared to the waist, Thanatos got to enjoy the realization of his mental picture of their clothing strewn carelessly across Zagreus' bed. Zagreus pressed himself to Thanatos' front, heedless of the mess of his come that still covered his belly. He had more important things to do

instead. Such as: licking his way into Thanatos' mouth once more. Such as: rolling his hips so that Thanatos could feel his cock hard in the leggings he hadn't bothered to remove.

"Looked like it felt good," Zagreus said, amid a flurry of kisses initiated just as much by Thanatos as it was by him.

"How long were you watching?" Thanatos maneuvered Zagreus onto his back, putting enough space between them only for the length of time it took to remove the remainder of their clothing.

"Not long." Zagreus drew him in again, spreading his legs to allow Thanatos between. "I showed up for the best part, though."

Thanatos laughed, kissed him again, and let Zagreus grind against his hip. "I thought about you," he said, just to make Zagreus moan.

"What... what did you think about?" Zagreus said, and then prevented Thanatos from answering for a length of time by way of his tongue.

"What you look like when you come." He let more of his weight settle against Zagreus, the jut of his hipbone rubbing at Zagreus' cock. Thanatos wasn't hard again, that part of him quite thoroughly exhausted for now, but he was immensely pleased with the way he was affecting Zagreus. "What you might look like if you sucked my cock."

Zagreus grasped his shoulders, ducking his head to kiss a line up Thanatos' throat. It felt even better than he'd imagined. "*Fuck*. You want that? I'll do it. I'm good with my mouth."

"Well. Not *now*."

"Oh, no, not now." Zagreus laughed. "You're staying right there for now. Oh gods, I normally have better stamina than this."

"Are you quite sure about that?"

"Yes," Zagreus said, although Thanatos was not certain whether this was in answer to his question or in general. He was incoherent for a long moment

after that, half his words muffled in Thanatos' neck, but he caught *good* and *more* and *don't stop*.

"Oh, don't worry about that. I don't think I'll ever stop."

Zagreus thrust against him with all the power in his frame, which was quite a lot, Thanatos having to put effort to keep himself from being bucked off. Zag tipped his head back, baring his throat, hands over his head, clasping at the blankets beneath him. It was almost as if Thanatos had him pinned, like he'd just won a sparring match. The way Zagreus begged for mercy was also congruent with this image.

"Gods, you're beautiful like this." Was this how he would look if Thanatos fucked him, strung-out and needy for it, begging for his touch? Thanatos experimentally rolled his hips forward, as if he was pushing into the welcoming heat of Zagreus' body.

"*Ohfuck—that*, keep doing that."

He kept doing that, unable to keep a grin off his face as he worked Zagreus up to and past his climax, reveling the sound of his name gasped in pleasure.

"Wow," Zagreus sighed, "you really did figure something out, didn't you?"

"I had some help," Thanatos admitted. Zagreus kissed him again, a bit softer this time, and then sat up, searching around his room for something.

"Really?"

"Yes. Strangely enough, Charon gave me fairly useful advice."

Zagreus cleaned them up with a cloth this time, rather than his tongue, and then shoved the blankets aside to curl up beneath them. "Well. Remind me to give him an ambrosia or two, that advice seems like it worked."

"I still have a lot to figure out," Thanatos admitted, curling up beside him. Zagreus shifted so that Thanatos could lay on his shoulder.

"I'll help, if you like?"

"That would be ideal."

Being held in his lover's post-coital embrace was much more comfortable than he could have imagined, especially when Zagreus accompanied it by stroking his hair, up from the nape of his neck to his crown and back again. The scratch of his nails sent tingling pleasure down Than's spine, and he let his eyes close to fully enjoy the blissfulness of it.

There were few new sensations that a god as old as the existence of humanity ever felt, but Thanatos did not mind when he stumbled upon one such as this.

He suspected he wouldn't mind any of the other new feelings Zagreus brought into his awareness.

Author's Note:

Find me on twitter @luddlestons or on my brand new nsfw twitter @luddlesmut where i don't listen to answers to polls.